



1999-2000 Strategic Plan, Goal #1: Increase the childhood immunization rate for children 0 to 2 years of age to 90%.

District IV continues to strive towards a 90% immunity rate in our 0 to 2 year old population. The fact that this goal is repeated in our 2001-2003 Strategic Plan does not mean we have not been successful but instead it reinforces our commitment to continue our work until the goal is met. In fact, when this goal is attained the focus will be on maintaining an immunization rate of 90% or greater in our 0 to 2 year old population.

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Illustrated in figure 1 below, it is clear that CDHD has struggled to increase the rate of appropriately immunized children, two years of age, within our own clientele. Our information technology staff has developed a state of the art immunization registry and we have successfully maintained partnerships with physicians, hospitals, schools, and child care providers all in a concentrated effort to assure appropriate vaccination levels within the community. Our immunization staff is committed to providing the highest level of care but the numbers have consistently shown that we were missing the mark. It finally became evident that we had a major problem with the quality and accuracy of documentation in our record keeping.

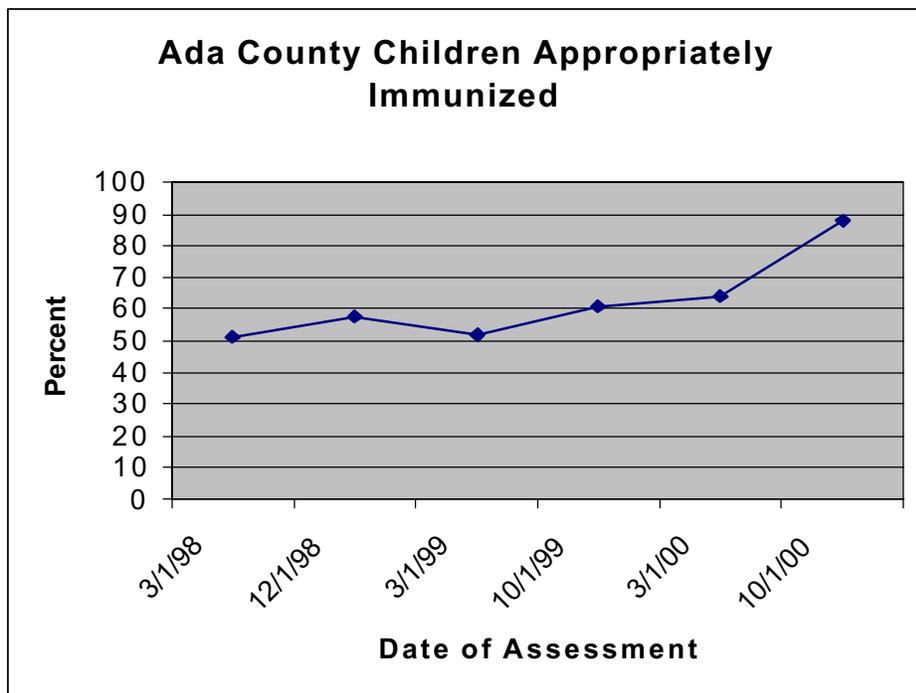


Figure 1

We made the decision to tackle the arduous task of examining each individual immunization record and researching any deficiencies and correcting them. We also used the registry to research the immunization record of a child who had followed up with a different provider. We then sent recall letters to parents and, if necessary, made phone calls to schedule appointments. The immunization staff did an excellent job of completing this exacting task and manually examining an estimated 60,000 records while keeping up with the daily responsibilities of their jobs.

This intensive effort to clean up our immunization records has proven to have been an effective training tool. Our staff became very aware of common documentation mistakes. They also became more cognizant of the overall effect of missed opportunities to appropriately immunize each child. To improve the accuracy of documentation, a full-time quality control position was created. Figure 2 illustrates how attention to detail and an active reminder /recall system has been effective in our Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Program.

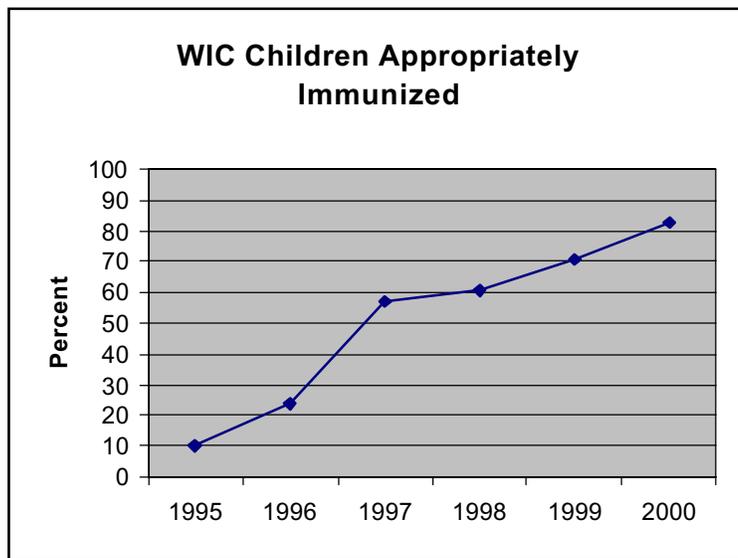


Figure 2

Information technology staff developed a secure, web-based registry called ImmuNET. They will however continue to support our system-based immunization registry. An average of 3,500 records of newborns are added to the system annually. With parental or client consent, each immunization record is then placed in the statewide Idaho Reminder Information System (IRIS). Electronic access to their child's immunization history helps parents and health care providers keep track of the vaccinations received, resulting in fewer missed opportunities towards achieving a 90% immunization rate.

5 Immunization Visits by Age 2

Educate and Serve As A Resource

ImmuNET / Registry Reminder System

Take advantage of every opportunity to vaccinate when children are seen by health care providers.

Healthy Children Are Our Future

These five points and beliefs are tantamount in achieving and sustaining a 90% immunity level within our community. The effort must be made by each of us who interact with children and their families. Recent pertussis outbreaks in Idaho point to the necessity of our vigilance against vaccine preventable diseases now and in the future.